



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2019

Commissioners Present: Dr. Michael Gollub, Dr. Robert Levin, Kelly Long, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Dr. Cesar Morales, Dr. Carola Oliva-Olson, Bruce Stenslie, Barry Zimmerman

Excused Absence: Stan Mantooth

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Lauren Arzu, Heather Davidson, Sharon Elmensdorp, Fahim Farag, Jimena Hernandez, Jennifer Johnson, Elizabeth Majestic, Nani Oesterle

Public Present: Arthur Argomaniz, Heather Garcia, Elizabeth Hardin, Andrew Huizar, Mabel Munoz, Erik Sternad, Elizabeth Szczepanek, Danielle Thomas, Alicia Villicana

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marquez-O'Neill opened the meeting at 1:02 and shared quotes regarding the importance of kindness and mindfulness.

2. Approval of Minutes from June 27, 2019 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Zimmerman, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to approve the minutes from the June 27, 2019 Commission Meeting. The motion passed with Commissioner Long abstaining.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Petra Puls requested that the agenda be re-ordered so that the Update and Discussion of Implementing FY 2019-21 Strategic Investments be heard as the first item after the consent agenda and to remove the PACT presentation. She also provided an overview of color coded handouts in the supplemental packet.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Stenslie, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

2580 East Main Street Suite 203~Ventura, CA 93003~(805) 648-9990~www.first5ventura.org

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Recommendation to adopt a resolution per Government Code 54954(a) to establish time and place for holding regular Commission meetings for Calendar Year 2020

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. Update and Discussion of Implementing FY 2019-21 Strategic Investments

Petra Puls noted Updates on Strategic Investments has been a standing agenda item in recent months and directed the Commissioners to the handouts in grey. This update will focus on NfLs as well as other strategic investments such as systems change efforts and parent leadership.

NfL services are up and running at 13 locations across the county, with many sites continuing at existing locations, which provides continuity and stability for families. Petra noted new sites include La Colonia and Ocean View and that Open House events were held at each location with a total of over 300 attendees. She shared pictures from recent Open Houses and directed the Commissioners to the Open House Flyer which lists all locations countywide. Petra also commended ICFS leadership and staff for all their efforts to build welcoming spaces. Classes started in late August countywide, offered two days a week at each location, and as of August 28 more than 290 children are enrolled, with Moorpark and Simi Valley sites fully enrolled. Petra provided a summary of the Ventura NfL Ribbon Cutting at Will Rogers Elementary in partnership with the Ventura Chamber of Commerce and invited all Commissioners to attend the Camarillo NfL Ribbon Cutting on October 3, 2019.

Petra reported that due to feedback from participating families a sliding fee scale will not be implemented at this time. She added F5VC and ICFS staff are developing a voluntary contribution model that takes into consideration time, talent, and treasure. She also provided an update on parent transition teams and parent advisory groups, noting kickoff meetings are scheduled in each of our three service regions. Parent feedback will drive program modifications and be tailored to specific locations.

Commissioner Long reported she was contacted by a constituent whose fees have changed from \$60 to over \$900 per month and asked for a best contact to provide to the constituent. Petra reported this was likely for preschool as NfLs do not charge family fees and offered to follow-up directly for more information. She added more preschool updates will be presented later.

Petra also provided updates on systems change investments and efforts. Of the approximately 50 activities F5VC staff is currently engaged in, 10 proposed priority areas were identified using F5VCs guiding principles, including engaging community partners and commissioners to build capacity and support early childhood services. F5VC staff are using a 'lead, support, follow' framework to evaluate how to manage staff and budget resources.

Petra reviewed the proposed systems change priorities and noted F5VC staff will present further details on activities and strategies for proposed priority areas in the coming months. She requested feedback from the Commission on proposed systems change priority areas.

Commissioner Stenslie asked what other First 5 Commissions are doing with shared data. Petra reported it varies greatly by county and shared F5 Orange County is investing in an early development index, which tracks data when children enter Kindergarten to map child well-being.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson advised staff to research local interest in dual language learning and how this may apply to Early Childhood Education.

Commissioner Gollub asked staff to continue to prioritize the importance of prenatal and maternal health.

Commissioner Zimmerman noted VCHSA is working with CalWorks on a home visit initiative to work with first time mothers in prenatal stages. He noted F5VC should seek to expand those types of programs.

Commissioner Long noted she would like local families to be aware of safety net services and suggested F5VC incorporate such information into parent education.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill asked if the proposed priority areas are those F5VC will lead on and if F5VC will still collaborate in other areas such as trauma informed care, oral health, etc. Petra confirmed.

Petra thanked the Commissioners for their input and asked Elizabeth Majestic to provide an update on parent engagement. Elizabeth summarized recent Parent Leader Network (PLN) development activities and played a video from EC-LINC about the PLN and the role of the Manifesto for Race Equity. She introduced Arthur Argomaniz from the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) to provide an update.

Arthur thanked local parent leaders for their time and dedication to support children and families in Ventura County and beyond, and commended F5VC staff and leadership for their dedication to parent engagement. Elizabeth also reported on recent media training provided to local parent leaders with resources from the Pritzker Family Foundation. She added that local parent leaders will be attending a three-day training in Chicago, and announced two local parents were selected to be national steering committee members.

Commissioner Long thanked local parents for taking the time to support all families in Ventura County.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson thanked the parents for being the best example of parents as first teachers.

Commissioner Morales thanked the parents for their leadership and commended them for putting Ventura County on the map and valuing the importance of a learning and support network.

Danielle Thomas and Elizabeth Szczepanek thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity and noted their goal is to help as many local children and families as possible.

Petra thanked our dedicated parents and staff. She also thanked CSSP and the Pritzker Family Foundation for supporting such a successful partnership. Elizabeth concluded her update noting that F5VC has been invited to participate in the EC-LINC community of practice for family engagement in a leadership role.

7. Administration and Finance Committee

Commissioner Stenslie reported on behalf of Administration and Finance Committee that at the September meeting proposed updates to the health care policy and audit procedures were reviewed.

a) Recommendation to Update Provision for Employee Health Care Benefits

Jennifer Johnson reported the proposed changes are required for compliance with Affordable Care Act (ACA) guidelines. ACA guidelines define full-time employment as 30 hours or more per week, and prohibit a cash back option for employees who decline health care coverage. She reviewed the proposed changes and noted the change to classification for full-time employment would apply only to health benefits. Jennifer added the cash back option is no longer utilized but remains in the employee handbook.

Jennifer noted the Committee reviewed and supports the proposed revision to the proration schedule and directed Commissioners to the enclosed proration rate table for employees working less than 30 hours per week. Legal counsel has also reviewed and approved the proposed changes. She concluded that fiscal impact will be minimal as most staff work 40 hours per week.

Commissioner Long asked about the effective date. Jennifer noted that Commission practice currently follows ACA guidelines and a July 1, 2019 effective date will ensure alignment of the pro-ration schedule for a new employee.

Commissioner Levin asked why employees cannot get cash back if they do not utilize employer sponsored health plans. Jennifer noted such an option is no longer permissible under ACA regulations.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to update the provision for employee health care benefits related to the definition of full time and opting out of health care coverage, in accordance with the Affordable Care Act. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Recommendation to Increase FY 2019-21 Contract with Child Development Resources, Inc. for the Preschool Scholarship Program

Nani Oesterle gave an overview of prior Commission actions to support preschool scholarships in certain areas of the County and the selection of Child Development Resources, Inc. (CDR) through a competitive RFP process. Nani noted the contract with CDR commenced on July 1, 2019 and assumed a certain amount of transition from past providers and families when considering projected outreach expenses. Unfortunately not as many families transitioned as anticipated, which has resulted in the need for additional marketing and outreach expenditures to achieve full enrollment. Nani concluded that this recommendation is to increase the FY 2019-21 contract with CDR by \$10,000 annually for marketing and outreach expenditures, for a total contract not to exceed \$820,000. She added no new allocation of funds is required as funds are available in the current preschool initiative allocation.

Commissioner Levin asked if \$800,000 is for scholarships and \$20,000 is for outreach. Nani noted total annual amount for implementing the scholarship program with the proposed increase is \$62,000, with \$348,000 available annually for scholarships.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked if this is a one-time allocation for outreach and if the same level of outreach is anticipated to be required in year two. Nani noted year two marketing and outreach costs are unknown at this time and staff will review and consider prior to updating the budget for year two.

Commissioner Levin asked if outreach expenses were budgeted in the prior scholarship system. Nani reported NfLs did allocate staff time for outreach and marketing and there was also a strong word-of-mouth referral system.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zimmerman, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to authorize the Executive Director to increase the FY 2019-21 contract with Child Development Resources, Inc. by \$10,000 per year for two years to support the increased outreach needed for the implementation of the scholarship program for families residing in Ojai Valley, Moorpark, Simi Valley, and Port Hueneme/South Oxnard, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$820,000 for July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Recommendation to Grant Authority to Contract with VIVA Social Impact Partners to Conduct Analysis on QRIS Data for IMPACT Hub Region 7

Nani noted the goal of QRIS is to support continued preschool quality assessments and improvements, and presented a recap of the regional QRIS work funded by First 5 California over recent years. She noted IMPACT Hub region 7 includes Ventura, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties, with F5VC serving as the fiscal lead. As the current five-year allocation ends June 30, 2020, partners across the three county region unanimously agreed hiring a consultant contractor to analyze existing data would be the best use of funds not yet allocated. The consultant will also be responsible for creating data briefs that will be used in partner convenings and public outreach. Nani reviewed the RFP process and reported that seven applications were received, which were reviewed by an independent committee to determine finalists. She noted two finalists were interviewed, and based on qualifications and scope of work VIVA Social Impact Partners (VIVA) was recommended for selection. Nani provided an overview of VIVA's qualifications and reported the contract would be for a maximum amount of \$100,000 from September 20, 2019 through June 30, 2020. She added no new allocation of funds is required as funds are provided by First 5 California.

Commissioner Levin asked what results we can expect from this analysis and what each County is contributing. Nani reported that four years of data would be analyzed for impact over time in relation to location, native language, ethnic socioeconomic demographics, etc. Nani also reported that Counties do not contribute as funds are provided by First 5 California, with F5VC serving as the fiscal lead.

Commissioner Levin noted as resources decline he would prefer to see investments in services rather than data analysis. He asked what other investments these resources may be allocated to. Nani reported funds are restricted to supporting QRIS system building. Nani noted approved investment areas include site and class assessments, trainings and professional development, 'train the trainer' models, and establishing and maintaining data systems, all of which have been funded in prior years. She added all three counties feel this is necessary to determine investment priorities for IMPACT 2.0 moving forward.

Petra added this four-year allocation of about \$790,000 is restricted to support QRIS implementation across the three county region and significant initial investments were made to coordinate trainings, assess sites, and in workforce development. She reported as total remaining funds for the region are about

\$150,000 all three counties felt investing in proper analysis of existing data will be necessary to drive decisions moving forward and position the region for additional funding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to grant authority to the Executive Director to enter into a contract with VIVA Social Impact Partners to conduct analysis on QRIS data for all three counties in IMPACT Hub Region 7- Ventura, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara, for a total contract not to exceed \$100,000 for September 20, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The motion passed with Commissioner Levin opposed.

10. Recommendation to Grant Authority to Contract with the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at University of California, Berkeley to Participate in the California Early Care & Education Workforce Study

Commissioners Morales and Oliva-Olson recused themselves.

Nani noted F5VC was recently contacted by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at University of California, Berkeley to participate in their upcoming statewide workforce study. The Center is highly regarded for their research and publications and seeks to do a comprehensive assessment of the childcare workforce, including wages, benefits, educational level, well-being and more. She added the last similar workforce study was 12 years ago. Nani reported F5VC has the opportunity to fund an oversampling of Ventura County data in order to conduct Ventura County specific analysis at a cost of \$47,000. She noted VCOE, VCCF, and CDR have already committed to providing funds equivalent to about half of the study cost and discussions are ongoing with CSUCI for additional support. Nani reported the maximum contribution from F5VC is \$22,500 and that the recommended action would grant the Executive Director authority to contract for up to \$47,000 with remaining funds coming from community partners. She added no new allocation of funds is required as funds are available within the total preschool initiative allocation.

Commissioner Levin asked what else this could be spent on. Petra noted the current allocation for F5VC preschool investments is \$1.4 million, which has not been fully allocated for FY 2019-20. She added this investment will be impactful as we position Ventura County to capitalize on increased state investments in early childhood education. Nani added as state early childhood investments increase, Ventura County may be limited by its workforce capacity.

Commissioner Long asked if this is a duplication of census efforts. Petra noted this study will be specific to early childhood professionals.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill commended F5VC staff for reaching out to community partners to gain commitments and build community support. She added this investment will position Ventura County for more funds from state and other resources.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zimmerman, seconded by Commissioner Long, to grant authority to the Executive Director to enter into a contract with University of California, Berkeley to obtain specific Ventura County data from a statewide study on the early childhood education workforce, for a total contract not to exceed \$47,000 for September 20, 2019 through June 30, 2021. The motion passed, with Commissioners Morales and Oliva-Olson abstaining.

11. Discussion of Strategic Planning

Petra noted the current strategic plan goes through 2020 and historically F5VC's strategic plans covered a three- to five- year period. She added the current plan was reviewed in June 2019 with no changes recommended due to the amount of planning work related to new investments for years 4 and 5 of the current plan.

Petra reported that as the current plan ends on June 30, 2020 and implementation lags one-year behind, a new plan must be adopted in June 2020 to be implemented on July 1, 2021. A one-year delay in implementation allows for proper allocation and alignment of resources, both internally and with funded partners. Petra recapped key elements of the current Strategic Plan, the shift towards capacity building and systems change, and detailed investment areas and transition strategies that the Commission approved in recent months.

Petra presented two options for how to proceed for strategic planning – either adopt a new Strategic Plan by June 2020 or extend the current plan for up to two years while further engaging in systems change investments and strengthening the new NfL system. The extension of the current plan would allow for more time to evaluate our current \$6.5 million investment model for impact and modifications. She added this option would also allow for staff resources to be directed to systems change work and allow time to build sustainability for our new NfL system. Learnings would be used to develop a new Strategic Plan to be adopted by no later than June 2022.

Petra presented an alternative of using the next nine months to adopt a new plan by June 2020. She reviewed the potential timeline for the strategic planning process, outlined data collection phases, and noted lessons learned will drive Commission reflection and potential modification of mission, vision, and guiding principles. Development of goals, objectives, strategies, and evaluation framework would follow after that. If adopted in June 2020, the new Strategic Plan would be implemented on July 1, 2021.

Commissioner Zimmerman suggested hybrid options be considered to allow further information on state initiatives to come to light and that a guidance assessment be included in phase one.

Commissioner Morales noted we should assess how our principles apply to our work and the current needs of children and families in Ventura County. He added we need to be prepared to advocate for additional resources to be allocated locally.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted she would prefer to take time to see how current implementation is going, but also wants to make sure we are not waiting to adjust to shifting trends and priorities.

Commissioner Long asked staff to consider how current data collection efforts just approved will be incorporated into this decision. She added that new funded partners may not have enough data for a proper evaluation. Commissioner Zimmerman added F5VC should assess future opportunities prior to evaluating current impact and investments as a comprehensive data analysis may be useful later on. He added he would like to see an industry-informed vision plan that takes data on current statewide trends and potential state funding allocations in order to determine whether to delay strategic planning.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted we need the ability to adjust as state EC priorities are established.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill thanked the Commissioners for their input and asked if any Commissioner wants to work with staff to develop 'option 1a'. Commissioner Morales noted he trusts in staff to take the lead on developing this model.

Petra noted the consensus seems to be to develop 'option 1a' (reviewing external environment and opportunities) and not option 2 (full strategic plan by June 2020) at this time. The Commissioners agreed. Petra reported staff will develop an outline of 'option 1a' to be presented to the Commission at the next meeting.

12. Report from Executive Director

Petra delivered highlights from her written report, noting the State Controller's Office has certified the F5VC FY 17-18 expanded audit conformed with reporting standards and that the FY 18-19 audit will be presented in October. She welcomed Dr. Sharon Elmensdorp to the F5VC team, adding she joined the staff on July 1, 2019, and has worked with F5VC to coordinate Help Me Grow efforts since 2011.

Petra detailed recent efforts to convene F5 funded preschool partners to discuss the new preschool family fee implementation and associated challenges. F5VC partners are implementing a sliding fee scale with a goal of families who are above CA State Preschool income thresholds contributing 25% of total preschool costs. Partners are having trouble enrolling families, and fees have had an impact on enrollment numbers. In addition, as more families are qualified for state preschool, our target population is reduced. Concerns about immigration issues are also impacting enrollment in preschools, NfLs, and local school districts. Petra noted F5VC is working with preschool partners to make sure our investment is utilized as much as possible.

F5CA Commission approved \$103 million in funding for IMPACT 2020. Applications are expected to come out in the winter. First 5s have right of first refusal for IMPACT funds.

Petra updated the Commission on the Help Me Grow pilot to implement ACEs screenings. Staff are working on how best to scale such screenings. She added that all PACT teachers were trained to conduct developmental screenings.

Petra noted that early literacy events at the Annex continue to be successful, with over 70 in attendance in July. Petra invited all commissioners to attend Story Time events, which are held on the last Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at the Collection in Oxnard. She added that an LOI was submitted to the Pritzker Family Foundation to apply for a grant which would allow us to train library staff to implement PACT programming.

Petra asked the Commissioners to review highlights of recent outreach activities and commended Ventura County CEO Mike Powers for championing the importance of early childhood investments in his State of the County report.

She also reported that the F5 Association is working on updating statewide priority areas, and discussed the new First 5 Center for Children's Policy. Petra directed the Commission to the enclosed Bill Tracker and noted AB1004 and SB436 are currently awaiting the governor's signature.

Petra concluded her report with a summary of enclosed media, including an article from the census bureau showing poverty rates are not declining and that for the first time in 20 years health insurance enrollment is declining among children.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill asked about the follow-up process once an ACEs survey is complete. Sharon Elmsdorp noted that families are referred for services, and offered to share the summary report from the pilot with the Commission.

13. Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Gollub asked about data on the impact of vaping on health and any projected likelihood of increased revenue to First 5s if residents purchase cigarettes instead of vaping. Petra noted Proposition 56 allocates tax resources from tobacco and vaping or other e-cigarette products.

Commissioner Long expressed concern about parent costs for preschool and asked such information be communicated to the commission as agenda item at an upcoming meeting. Commissioner Morales added enrollment data may not be sufficient to evaluate parents who chose not to enroll due to new fee structure or other concerns. Petra noted F5VC can report on what has been implemented and how it compares to market rates.

Commissioner Levin reported there are nine reported cases of severe respiratory issues related to vaping in Ventura County, and the average age statewide in these cases is 27.

Commissioner Levin asked staff to consider direct services when presenting to the Commission.

Commissioner Levin asked if the proposed funding for statewide universal preschool will include mandatory enrollment. Commissioner Long reported details are not known at this time.

14. Next Meeting

Thursday, October 24, 2019, Ventura County Community Foundation, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 pm.